

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 00341 141739Z

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6961

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 341

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIN, GR

SUBJ: GREEK GOVERNMENT REQUEST FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

REF: STATE 07285

1. WHEN I MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS LAST NIGHT I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD RETURNED FROM WASHINGTON WITH A PRELIMINARY REACTION CONCERNING THE GREEK GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST OF TEN DAYS AGO FOR POSSIBLE U.S. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE DURING 1975 (REFTEL). I TOLD BITSIOS THAT AS MY JANUARY 4TH MEETING WITH THE GOG MINISTERS ON THIS SUBJECT WAS BREAKING UP, ECONOMIC COORDINATION AND PLANNING MINISTER PAPALIGOURAS SUGGESTED THAT THEY MEET JOINTLY WITH ME AGAIN AFTER MY RETURN FROM WASHINGTON. BITSIOS SAID THAT HE WOULD GET IN TOUCH WITH PAPALIGOURAS AT ONCE AND SEE IF HE STILL WANTED TO SET UP SUCH A MEETING. IN THE MEANTIME HE ASKED IF I COULD GIVE HIM SOME INDICATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PRELIMINARY U.S. RESPONSE. I TOLD BITSIOS I WOULD PREFER TO GET INTO THE MATTER MORE FULLY WHEN THE MEETING HERE WAS CONVENED BUT THAT THE GENERAL REACTION IN WASHINGTON WAS TO CONSIDER THE REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE AS SYMPATHETICALLY AND FAVORABLY AS POSSIBLE, GIVEN OUR ECONOMIC SITUATION, THE ENERGY CRISIS, AND WORLDWIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR EMERGENCY AID. I SAID THERE WAS NO DOUBT AT ALL IN MY MIND THAT THE USG WANTED TO BE HELPFUL IF IT PROVED TO BE POSSIBLE

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AND APPROPRIATE WAYS COULD BE FOUND.

2. I TOLD BITSIOS THAT THERE WAS SOME URGENCY IN OUR GETTING TOGETHER BECAUSE I UNDERSTOOD THA THERE WOULD BE SOME GREEK OFFICIALS ATTENDING THE IMF/IBRD TECHNICAL MEETINGS SCHEDULED TO BE HELD IN WASHINGTON JANUARY 15-17, AND THAT WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO ARRANGE PRELIMINARY CONSULTATIONS WITH THESE GREEK OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON IF THE GOG WISHED. BITSIOS MADE A NOTE OF THIS AND SAID HE WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH ME AGAIN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
KUBISCH

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